

Starting a closed in-person/zoom/social media mixed Epicurean Study Group; Utilizing this Website and Where to Start

Post by "Root304" of March 6, 2023 at 3:53 AM

Thank you all for your supportive responses! It means an enormous amount to me. The forum regulars and the regulars on Lucretius Today are like rock stars to me. 😊😊

Quote from Cassius

I would be interested to hear more about what you think of your group's interests. If they are into "lifestyle improvement" then definitely Living for Pleasure. If they are into technicals of philosophy and the decline and fall of western civilization, then that is another approach where we can make other recommendations.

From what they have expressed and from what I intuit, most folks are more interested in discussing practicable things like how to live a more pleasurable life, some are interested in studying hedonistic thought more generally and others are just quite new to philosophy but whom I have gotten interested in Epicurus. I don't think I'm going to have to contend with a pronounced Stoic influence with this group. These are more culturally Left folks. I think my goal is to balance getting into the weeds on philosophy and Epicurean history, with philosophizing about practices to live a more pleasurable life. In terms of studying philosophy, I want to start with studying Epicurus as in-depth as we need to go, and then if the group lasts beyond that, move into Cyrenaic, Utilitarian and other sensual philosophies and authors. Establishing that base Epicurean lens would be appropriate as I want to make the very best case for "hedonistic" and "sensual" philosophy first.

Mulling over these replies today, I think I'm pretty adamant about keeping everything free at least in the beginning. So with this access to DeWitt, I think I'm going to start out with some selections from "Epicurus and his Philosophy" that would give a good historical and philosophical context. I won't "assign" the entire book chapter by chapter right out of the gate unless people are really into it. I know when I read the first chapter or two, naïve as it is, I had to just stop for awhile and ponder what this meant for my entire view of history. It really got me excited about Epicurus.

Then, as [Kalosyni](#) suggests, perhaps we could move into reading some Epicurus, and some other ancient source material that may be of interest to Epicurean "practices" to start the discussion on what some folks came for. I realize that studying and contemplating the philosophy is the major way one practices Epicureanism, and I think people would come to appreciate that idea once they have a bit of a longer look at it. Yet there are also ways we can

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talk about branching out from that as well.

Going over some of the [Principal Doctrines](#) with my partner who doesn't have a philosophical background, I felt confident enough to provide some decent contextual clues and cues drawn from the many hours of listening to Lucretius Today that I could help her draw more from the rather dense text, pointing to the various philosophical moves Epicurus was making. Along the way, I could point to the DeWitt text for further reading, as well as, Lucretius Today podcasts for listening. As the group assembles a direction of inquiry, we could chart a course on where to go next in terms of texts we read together, whether that's Dr. Austin's book if we need more of a refresher, or Dr. Rucker's book as [Don](#) shared or something like it to keep things in the realm of practices, or deeper down the Epicurean rabbit hole with Lucretius. I've only read parts of Lucretius so I personally would like to get to that sooner rather than later. 😊

Let me know what you think of this path if you like, and thanks again for the replies!